



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
2000 NAVY PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-2000

IN REPLY REFER TO

MAY 5 1999

MEMORANDUM FOR MAJOR CLAIMANT STAFF CHAPLAINS

Subj: FOCUS 06/99 (FUNERAL HONORS)

Encl: (1) N09C/CHINFO 211646Z Apr 99

1. This is to provide clarifying, provisional guidance regarding the role of chaplains in the proposed change in policy for military funeral honors.

2. As noted in the proposed change that was issued in recent Public Affairs Guidance, enclosure (1), chaplains are not mentioned as essential or mandatory participants in the provision of a minimum of a two-member funeral honors team. The primary functions, under the recent proposal, of the two-member team are for the folding and presentation of the American flag. Additional resources are committed in this manner: "The military Services may provide additional honors subject to the availability of resources." This last statement is consistent with current DoD policy that has been in force since 1985.

3. The above provisional guidance is based upon the following:

a. Chaplains are not mentioned anywhere in DoD's definition of required personnel for military funeral honors.

b. In a recent survey conducted among veterans groups, funeral directors and other interested agencies and individuals, the desire for chaplains was almost negligible in comparison with a desire to have a flag presented by a uniformed member from the Service of the deceased; taps played (in quality fashion); and, a seven person honor guard.

c. The survey data included information from 9819 funerals where families requested military funeral honors. The most requested components were the following:

(1) Folding and presentation of the flag	- 96.6%
(2) Firing Party	- 63.6%
(3) Bugler/Taps	- 55.0%
(4) Pall Bearers	- 44.9%
(5) Chaplain	- 7.8%

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4. The Armed Forces Chaplains Board was an active participant in DoD's development of the report that went to Congress in April 1999. As it currently stands, no mandatory involvement of chaplains will be stipulated. "Available resources" will be the guiding rule regarding chaplain participation. In conclusion, the above clarification does not require chaplains to say "yes" to every request to participate in funeral honors; nor does this guidance permit chaplains to say "no" to every request. It merely encourages chaplains to be as responsive and supportive as possible, treating each request on a case by case basis, as chaplain resources (active, reserve and retired) are available.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "M. R. Ferguson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

M. R. FERGUSON  
Executive Assistant to the  
Chief of Chaplains

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UNCLASSIFIED  
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\*\*\*\*\* ACTION: N09C/CHINFO \*\*\*\*\*

R 211646Z APR 99  
FM: SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//ASD-PA/DPL//

Subject: PUBLIC AFFAIRS GUIDANCE - PROPOSED CHANGE IN POLICY FOR

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03

SUBJ: PUBLIC AFFAIRS GUIDANCE - PROPOSED CHANGE IN POLICY FOR  
MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS

1. PURPOSE. TO PROVIDE PUBLIC AFFAIRS GUIDANCE FOR USE IN RESPONSE TO MEDIA AND PUBLIC QUERIES CONCERNING THE PROPOSED POLICY CHANGE CONCERNING MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS.
2. BACKGROUND. IT HAS BEEN DOD POLICY SINCE 1985 FOR THE MILITARY SERVICES, UPON REQUEST BY THE NEXT OF KIN, TO PROVIDE FUNERAL HONORS FOR VETERANS "WITHIN THE CONSTRAINTS OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES." THE POLICY PERMITS BUT DOES NOT REQUIRE SPECIFIC FUNERAL HONORS BASED UPON THE VETERAN'S SERVICE. AUTHORIZED LEVELS OF SUPPORT VARY ACCORDING TO THE LENGTH OF THE VETERAN'S MILITARY SERVICE, WHETHER THE VETERAN IS IN AN ACTIVE DUTY OR RESERVE STATUS AT TIME OF DEATH, OR IS A HOLDER OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR. WHEN REQUESTED BY NEXT OF KIN, THE MILITARY SERVICES HAVE CONTINUED TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT WITHIN MISSION AND RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS TO PROVIDE FUNERAL HONORS FOR VETERANS. HOWEVER, IN RECENT YEARS, DESPITE AUGMENTATION FROM VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS, RESERVE OFFICER TRAINING CORPS (ROTC) UNITS, AND OTHERS, THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNERAL HONORS FOR AMERICA'S VETERANS HAS BECOME A GROWING CONCERN FOR THE DOD, DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND SERVICE LEADERSHIP, FOR VETERANS, AND FOR THEIR FAMILIES. ON APRIL 19, 1999, DOD SENT A REPORT TO CONGRESS OUTLINING ITS PROPOSED CHANGE IN POLICY FOR MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS.
3. THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS POSTURE IS ACTIVE. ADDRESSEES ARE ENCOURAGED TO GIVE THIS GUIDANCE WIDEST POSSIBLE DISSEMINATION AND ARE ESPECIALLY ENCOURAGED TO REPORT THE PROPOSED CHANGE IN POLICY THROUGH INTERNAL INFORMATION CHANNELS.
4. OASD(PA) ANNOUNCED THE PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE POLICY CONCERNING MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 1999. THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT IS PROVIDED FOR YOUR USE.

'THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD) HAS CONVEYED TO CONGRESS A REPORT CONTAINING A PROPOSED POLICY TO IMPROVE THE AVAILABILITY AND DELIVERY OF MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS FOR VETERANS. THE POLICY, IF ACCEPTED BY CONGRESS, WILL REQUIRE THE MILITARY SERVICES FOR THE FIRST TIME, UPON REQUEST BY NEXT OF KIN, TO PROVIDE SPECIFIED FUNERAL HONORS FOR ANY VETERAN WHO HAS SERVED HONORABLY IN THE ARMED FORCES. (PARA) THE DOD REPORT RESPONDS TO A REQUIREMENT IN SECTION 567 OF THE FISCAL 1999 STROM THURMOND NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT (NDAA). THE PROPOSED POLICY RESPONDS TO THE REPORT OF THE CONFEREES ON THE NDAA THAT INDICATED THE INTENT OF THE CONFEREES THAT THE REQUIREMENTS FOR FUNERAL HONORS SPECIFIED IN THE NDAA WOULD BECOME

**ENCLOSURE(1)**

EFFECTIVE ON DEC. 31, 1999, ONLY IF THE SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS DID NOT RECOMMEND AN ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE. IF ACCEPTED BY CONGRESS, THE NEW DOD POLICY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED ON JAN. 1, 2000.

'COMMENTING ON THE PROPOSED DOD POLICY, UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS RUDY DE LEON SAID: "WORKING IN CONCERT WITH THE LEADERSHIP OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, THE MILITARY SERVICES, AND MANY MILITARY AND VETERANS SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS, WE CONSIDERED IN A VERY DELIBERATE AND COMPASSIONATE WAY HOW WE CAN BEST USE THE RESOURCES WE HAVE TO PROVIDE MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS FOR OUR VETERANS. OUR HEARTFELT, SHARED GOAL WAS TO HONOR APPROPRIATELY AND CONSISTENTLY THOSE VETERANS WHO HAVE FAITHFULLY DEFENDED ALL AMERICANS AND OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS. THESE PROPOSALS ACCOMPLISH THIS IMPORTANT GOAL."

'THE DOD PLAN WOULD IMPROVE ACCESS TO MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS BY ESTABLISHING A TOLL-FREE "REQUEST" NUMBER AND AN INTERNET WEB SITE WHICH FULLY EXPLAINS THE BENEFIT. THE DEPARTMENT WOULD MAXIMIZE ITS ABILITY TO HONOR REQUESTS BY WORKING IN CONCERT WITH LOCAL VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS THAT CURRENTLY PROVIDE MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS AND BY EXPANDING THE USE OF NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE FORCES. UNDER THIS PLAN, THE DEPARTMENT WILL HONOR EVERY REQUEST BY SENDING A TEAM THAT WILL CONSIST OF AT LEAST TWO INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL CONDUCT A CEREMONY INVOLVING THE FOLDING AND PRESENTATION OF THE AMERICAN FLAG. AT LEAST ONE OF THESE INDIVIDUALS WILL BE A MEMBER OF THE PARENT SERVICE OF THE DECEASED. THE PLAYING OF "TAPS" WILL ALSO BE A REQUIRED PART OF THIS CEREMONY, WHETHER BY BUGLER OR BY THE USE OF A HIGH QUALITY AUDIO RECORDING. THE MILITARY SERVICES MAY PROVIDE ADDITIONAL HONORS SUBJECT TO THE AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES.

'ANOTHER MAJOR SET OF IMPROVEMENTS UNDER THE PROPOSED POLICY CONCERNS STREAMLINING THE PROCESS FOR REQUESTING FUNERAL HONORS, COMMUNICATING REQUESTS TO THE PROVIDERS, AND TRACKING THE PROVISION OF HONORS. THE DEPARTMENT WILL MAINTAIN A TOLL-FREE NUMBER AND INTERNET WEB SITE FOR USE BY FUNERAL DIRECTORS TO OBTAIN FUNERAL HONORS WHEN VETERANS' FAMILIES REQUEST HONORS. THE DEPARTMENT WILL ALSO PROVIDE INFORMATION PACKAGES TO THE FUNERAL DIRECTORS TO AID IN THIS EFFORT.

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'AS IS CURRENT PRACTICE, BOTH ACTIVE AND RESERVE FORCES WILL BE USED TO PERFORM MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS. MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE HAVE VOLUNTEERED COUNTLESS HOURS TO PERFORM FUNERAL HONORS FOR VETERANS. TO RECOGNIZE AND ENCOURAGE VOLUNTEER SERVICE BY GUARD AND RESERVE MEMBERS, UNDER THE PROPOSED DOD PLAN NEW INCENTIVES FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF FUNERAL HONORS DUTY WOULD BE PROVIDED. THE PERFORMANCE OF FUNERAL HONORS DUTY WOULD BE EQUIVALENT TO INACTIVE-DUTY TRAINING BUT COULD NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR REQUIRED TRAINING. RETIREMENT CREDIT ABOVE THE CURRENT CAP WOULD BE PROVIDED FOR FUNERAL HONORS DUTY.

'MORE THAN 16 MILLION OF OUR NATION'S 26 MILLION MILITARY VETERANS SERVED DURING THE WORLD WAR II ERA. THE NATION MOURNED THE PASSING OF 537,000 VETERANS IN 1997, AN INCREASE OF 18 PERCENT COMPARED TO 1989. BY 2008, VETERANS' DEATHS ARE PROJECTED TO INCREASE 36 PERCENT COMPARED TO 1989. CONVERSELY, THE SIZE OF THE

ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY HAS DECREASED BY 35 PERCENT, FROM 2.1 MILLION IN 1989 TO 1.4 MILLION TODAY, AND THE RESERVE FORCES HAVE DECREASED IN SIZE BY 25 PERCENT. OF THE 1.4 MILLION ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE MEMBERS, MORE THAN 300,000 ARE STATIONED OR DEPLOYED OUTSIDE OF THE UNITED STATES AT ANY GIVEN TIME. THE GEOGRAPHICAL CHALLENGE HAS INCREASED AS WELL. OVER THE PAST DECADE, 81 OF 495 MAJOR MILITARY INSTALLATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES HAVE CLOSED, WITH 16 MORE MAJOR INSTALLATIONS SCHEDULED TO CLOSE BY 2001. AS A RESULT, FUNERAL HONOR GUARD DETAILS MUST OFTEN TRAVEL GREATER DISTANCES THAN IN YEARS PAST TO PROVIDE SUPPORT.

'THE PROPOSED DOD POLICY WAS DEVELOPED THROUGH A JOINT EFFORT TO DETERMINE THE BEST SOLUTION TO THE INCREASING CHALLENGES. AS PART OF THIS EFFORT, THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HOSTED AN EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE ON NOV. 17, 1998, IN WASHINGTON, D.C. EIGHTEEN MILITARY AND VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATED, INCLUDING: THE AMERICAN LEGION, THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS, PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, THE RETIRED OFFICERS ASSOCIATION (TROA), AMERICAN VETERANS (AMVETS), AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR, THE BLINDED VETERANS ASSOCIATION, GOLD STAR WIVES, THE RETIRED ENLISTED ASSOCIATION, THE MILITARY CHAPLAINS ASSOCIATION, THE FLEET RESERVE ASSOCIATION, THE AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION, THE AMERICAN GI FORUM, THE KOREAN WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION, THE MARINE CORPS LEAGUE, THE NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER ASSOCIATION, THE ARMY AVIATION ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, AND THE RESERVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION. SENIOR OFFICIALS FROM TWO NATIONAL FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATIONS AND CONGRESSIONAL STAFF ALSO PARTICIPATED.

'WHILE CONGRESS CONSIDERS THE PROPOSED DOD POLICY, THE MILITARY SERVICES WILL CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE THE FULLEST POSSIBLE IMPLEMENTATION OF EXISTING DOD POLICY.'

5. KEY COMMUNICATION POINTS:

A. THE CIVILIAN AND MILITARY LEADERSHIP OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE MILITARY SERVICES BELIEVE THAT THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED OUR NATION HONORABLY IN UNIFORM DESERVE OUR RESPECT AND APPRECIATION. THOSE WHO SERVE TODAY IN THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT AND THE SERVICES HAVE A PERSONAL APPRECIATION OF THE SACRIFICES MADE DURING MILITARY SERVICE.

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B. OUR HEARTFELT GOAL IS TO HONOR APPROPRIATELY AND CONSISTENTLY THOSE VETERANS WHO HAVE FAITHFULLY DEFENDED ALL AMERICANS AND OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS.

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C. IN RECENT YEARS, THERE HAS BEEN AN EVER-INCREASING RESOURCE CHALLENGE IN TERMS OF PROVIDING FUNERAL HONORS FOR VETERANS, PRIMARILY IN TERMS OF MANPOWER, NOT FUNDING.

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D. TO MEET THESE CHALLENGES, THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, IN A JOINT EFFORT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, HAS BEEN

WORKING WITH THE VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS, THE MILITARY SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS AND, OF COURSE, THE CONGRESS, TO DETERMINE HOW BEST TO IMPROVE THE DELIVERY OF MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS. BASED UPON THAT COLLABORATIVE EFFORT, THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE HAS NOW PROPOSED TO CONGRESS A PLAN THAT INCORPORATES THE RESULTS OF THAT COLLABORATIVE EFFORT.

E. IT'S IMPORTANT TO GRASP THE SCALE AND SCOPE OF THE NEED AND THE AVAILABLE RESOURCES. OVER 16 MILLION VETERANS SERVED IN WORLD WAR II. REGRETTABLY, THAT GENERATION IS NOW PASSING ON. SOME 456,000 VETERANS DIED IN 1989, THE LAST YEAR OF THE COLD WAR. FOR 1999, THAT FIGURE IS PROJECTED TO TOTAL TO SOME 561,000 VETERAN DEATHS - A 23 PERCENT INCREASE COMPARED TO 1989 - AND IN THE YEAR 2008, TO 620,000 DEATHS - A 36 PERCENT INCREASE COMPARED TO 1989. SO, THE STARK FACT IS THAT THE NEED IS INCREASING.

F. SINCE 1989, WHEN WE HAD 495 MAJOR MILITARY INSTALLATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES, WE'VE CLOSED 81 MAJOR INSTALLATIONS AND 16 MORE WILL CLOSE BY THE YEAR 2001. WITH FEWER INSTALLATIONS, THERE IS A GEOGRAPHICAL CHALLENGE. FUNERAL DETAILS IN MANY CASES NOW HAVE TO TRAVEL MUCH GREATER DISTANCES TO SUPPORT FUNERALS.

G. THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE HAS PROPOSED SPECIFIC MEASURES TO  
☐ IMPROVE THE AVAILABILITY AND THE DELIVERY OF MILITARY FUNERAL  
☐ HONORS. THESE MEASURES ARE SUSTAINABLE WITHIN THE LIMITS IMPOSED BY  
☐ DOWNSIZING, HIGH OPERATIONAL TEMPO, AND RECRUITING AND RETENTION CHALLENGES.

6. THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ARE APPROVED FOR USE IN RESPONSE TO MEDIA AND PUBLIC INQUIRIES:

Q1. WHEN WILL THE NEW DOD POLICY GO INTO EFFECT?

A1. THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE HAS PROPOSED THIS PLAN FOR CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL. IN THE INTERIM, THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS AND TO WORK TOWARD A FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN AS OF JANUARY 1, 2000.

Q2. HOW WILL THIS NEW DOD POLICY CHANGE THINGS IN TERMS OF THE FUNERAL HONORS BEING PERFORMED NOW?

A2. ONE MAJOR THRUST OF THE PROPOSED POLICY IS TO CHANGE PERMISSIONS TO REQUIREMENTS. SPECIFICALLY, THE MILITARY SERVICES WILL NOW BE REQUIRED, UPON REQUEST BY THE NEXT OF KIN, TO PROVIDE SPECIFIED FUNERAL HONORS FOR ANY VETERAN WHO HAS SERVED HONORABLY IN THE ARMED FORCES. THESE MANDATORY HONORS WILL CONSIST OF THE CEREMONIAL FOLDING AND PRESENTATION OF THE AMERICAN FLAG BY AT LEAST TWO AUTHORIZED PROVIDERS, AT LEAST ONE OF WHOM MUST BE A UNIFORMED MEMBER OF THE PARENT SERVICE OF THE DECEASED VETERAN, AND THE PLAYING OF "TAPS." GIVEN THE SCARCITY OF BUGLERS, THE USE AS NECESSARY OF HIGH-QUALITY AUDIO RECORDING OF "TAPS" WILL STILL BE AUTHORIZED. AS IS CURRENT PRACTICE, BOTH ACTIVE AND RESERVE FORCES WILL BE USED TO PERFORM MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS. IN KEEPING WITH SERVICE TRADITIONS, THE SERVICES MAY PROVIDE ADDITIONAL HONORS FOR VETERANS BEYOND THE GUARANTEED MINIMUMS WHEN LOCAL RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE. A SECOND MAJOR THRUST OF THE PROPOSED POLICY IS TO STREAMLINE THE PROCESS FOR REQUESTING

FUNERAL HONORS, COMMUNICATING REQUESTS TO THE PROVIDERS, AND TRACKING THE PROVISION OF HONORS. THE DOD WILL MAINTAIN A TOLL-FREE NUMBER AND INTERNET WEB SITE FOR USE BY FUNERAL DIRECTORS TO OBTAIN FUNERAL HONORS WHEN VETERANS' FAMILIES REQUEST HONORS. THE DOD WILL ALSO PROVIDE INFORMATION PACKAGES TO THE FUNERAL DIRECTORS TO AID THEM IN THIS EFFORT AND CONDUCT TRAINING FOR AUTHORIZED PROVIDERS.

Q3. DO THE VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORT THIS PROPOSED POLICY?

A3. THAT'S A QUESTION MORE APPROPRIATELY ANSWERED BY THE LEADERSHIP OF THE VARIOUS VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS (VSO'S). THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH AND CONSULTING WITH THE VSO'S AND THE FUNERAL DIRECTORS' ASSOCIATIONS AS WE REVIEWED THE MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS SITUATION AND EXPLORED OPTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE AVAILABILITY AND DELIVERY OF THOSE HONORS. THEY HAVE ALL BEEN ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS IN THE SHAPING OF THE PROPOSED PLAN. THROUGHOUT, THE VSO'S AS A WHOLE HAVE EXPRESSED AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEED TO BALANCE THE USE OF LIMITED RESOURCES TO ENSURE WE APPROPRIATELY HONOR OUR DECEASED VETERANS WHILE MAINTAINING A HIGH STATE OF MILITARY READINESS AND FULFILL THE NATION'S SECURITY REQUIREMENTS.

Q4. IS IT LIKELY THAT CONGRESS WILL ACCEPT THE DOD PROPOSALS IN LIEU OF THE 1999 NDAA LEGISLATION?

A4. WE HOPE CONGRESS WILL SUPPORT THIS PROPOSAL. IT WOULD NOT BE APPROPRIATE TO CHARACTERIZE THE LEVEL OF SUPPORT WE'VE RECEIVED IN OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH CONGRESS. IT WOULD BE MORE APPROPRIATE FOR YOU TO GET THAT ESTIMATE FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL MEMBERS THEMSELVES.

Q5. WHAT IS THE TOLL FREE NUMBER FAMILIES CAN NOW CALL TO GET FUNERAL HONORS FOR THEIR LOVED ONE?

A5. THE 1-800 SYSTEM IS CURRENTLY BEING DESIGNED. IT WILL BE STAFFED AND AVAILABLE BY JANUARY 1, 2000. IT WILL OFFER "ONE-CALL" ACCESS FOR MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS AND WILL ALSO BE AN IMPORTANT INSTRUMENT FOR QUALITY CONTROL. THE NUMBER IS INTENDED FOR USE PRIMARILY BY FUNERAL DIRECTORS. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT FAMILIES CAN'T USE THE NUMBER BUT A FACT THAT VERY CLEARLY EMERGED DURING OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH FUNERAL DIRECTORS AND VSO'S IS THAT THIRD PARTIES, AND NOT GRIEVING FAMILY MEMBERS, ARE BEST EQUIPPED, EMOTIONALLY AND IN TERMS OF FOCUS AND EXPERIENCE, TO MAKE THE ARRANGEMENTS.

Q6. HOW WILL THE INTERNET SITE WORK? CAN FAMILIES REQUEST FUNERAL HONORS ON LINE?

A6. THE PURPOSE OF THE INTERNET SITE IS TO PROVIDE TIMELY INFORMATION ABOUT FUNERAL HONORS. THE SITE INDICATES HOW TO REQUEST FUNERAL HONORS. HOWEVER, FUNERAL HONORS CANNOT BE REQUESTED ONLINE.

Q7. WHAT HAS CHANGED AS FAR AS USE OF RESERVE FORCES TO PERFORM THESE HONORS?

A7. UNDER THE DEPARTMENT'S PROPOSED PLAN, THE RESERVE FORCES ARE TO BE FUNDED FOR THIS MISSION, AND PROGRAMS WILL BE INSTITUTED TO OFFER INCENTIVES TO RESERVE FORCE MEMBERS. THIS WILL REMAIN A TOTAL FORCE MISSION, MAKING USE OF ALL AVAILABLE RESOURCES. THE RESERVE FORCES WILL CONTINUE TO PERFORM THIS VERY IMPORTANT MISSION.

Q8. WHO PROVIDES THE FLAG FOR THESE CEREMONIES? CAN A FAMILY GET MORE THAN ONE FLAG?

A8. THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS SUPPLIES THE FLAG TO THE DESIGNATED NEXT-OF-KIN. THERE IS NO REGULATORY PERMISSION TO SUPPLY MORE THAN ONE FLAG TO A FAMILY.

Q9. WILL THERE STILL BE DIFFERENCES IN THE HONORS PROVIDED TO RETIRED MILITARY WHO SERVED MORE THAN 20 YEARS AND THOSE WHO JUST SERVED A FEW YEARS? IS THERE GOING TO BE A GREATER EFFORT TO PROVIDE FULL HONORS FOR 20-YEAR VETERANS?

A9. THE DEPARTMENT'S PROPOSED PLAN MANDATES THAT THE SERVICES PROVIDE CERTAIN BASELINE REQUIREMENTS. THE SERVICES REMAIN FREE, HOWEVER, TO RENDER ADDITIONAL HONORS IN KEEPING WITH EACH SERVICE'S TRADITIONS, CULTURE, AND RESOURCES.

Q10. THE MARINES PROVIDE A FULL HONOR DETAIL FOR ANY FORMER MARINE WHOSE NEXT OF KIN REQUESTS THOSE HONORS. SINCE THE MARINES ARE DOING THAT, WHY CAN'T THE OTHER SERVICES PROVIDE FULL HONORS TOO?

A10. THE DEPARTMENT'S PROPOSED PLAN MANDATES THAT THE SERVICES PROVIDE CERTAIN BASELINE REQUIREMENTS. THE SERVICES REMAIN FREE, HOWEVER, TO RENDER ADDITIONAL HONORS IN KEEPING WITH EACH SERVICE'S TRADITIONS, CULTURE, AND RESOURCES.

Q11. WHAT PERCENT OF NEXT OF KIN REQUEST FUNERAL HONORS FOR THEIR LOVED ONE? DO YOU EXPECT THAT PERCENTAGE TO INCREASE UNDER THIS NEW POLICY?

A11. IN RECENT YEARS, APPROXIMATELY NINE PERCENT OF VETERANS' FAMILIES HAVE REQUESTED FUNERAL HONORS. WE ANTICIPATE THAT PERCENTAGE WILL INCREASE AS THE DEPARTMENT'S PLAN GAINS FULL TRACTION. OUR BEST ESTIMATE IS THAT IT MAY EVENTUALLY REACH 45 PERCENT. THIS IS AN ESTIMATE, AND COULD OF COURSE BE EITHER HIGH OR LOW. WE WON'T KNOW UNTIL WE START, AND UNTIL THE FULL EFFECTS OF INCREASED INFORMATION AND EASE OF ACCESS ARE KNOWN.

Q12. WILL SUCH THINGS AS FLYOVERS STILL BE AUTHORIZED? WHO IS AUTHORIZED A FLYOVER?

A12. FLYOVERS WILL STILL BE AUTHORIZED. THE PROPOSED POLICY DOES NOT IMPACT FLYOVER POLICY.

Q13. CAN YOU QUANTIFY IN SOME WAY WHAT THIS INCREASED COMMITMENT REPRESENTS? WILL IT REQUIRE 20 PERCENT MORE MANDAYS? 40 PERCENT MORE MANDAYS? "X" NUMBER MORE SERVICE MEMBERS EACH DAY?

A13. WITH A TWO PERSON FUNERAL DETAIL IN WHICH BOTH MEMBERS ARE UNIFORMED MILITARY, ASSUMING THAT 20 PERCENT OF THE FAMILIES OF DECEASED VETERANS REQUEST FUNERAL HONORS, THE RESOURCE COMMITMENT WORKS OUT ALMOST 1100 MANYEARS (ACTUALLY 1,076 MANYEARS). THAT'S APPROXIMATELY TWICE THE MANPOWER USAGE COMPARED TO LAST YEAR.

Q14. ABOUT HOW MANY ACTIVE DUTY OR RESERVE FORCES SERVICE MEMBERS WILL BE PERFORMING FUNERAL HONORS ON ANY GIVEN DAY UNDER THIS NEW POLICY?



A14. AT LEAST 600-700 MILITARY PERSONNEL OR OTHER AUTHORIZED PROVIDERS WILL BE PERFORMING FUNERAL HONORS ON ANY GIVEN DAY. WE ANTICIPATE THAT NUMBER WILL GROW TO ABOUT 1500 INDIVIDUALS BY THE YEAR 2005.

Q15. YOU KEEP MENTIONING AUTHORIZED PROVIDERS. WHO ARE THEY?

A15. THERE ARE MANY LOCAL POSTS AND CHAPTERS OF VETERANS' SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS WHO CURRENTLY RENDER FUNERAL HONORS. WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT IN SOME CASES THESE LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS WOULD BE WILLING TO PARTNER WITH US IN EITHER FULFILLING THE BASIC REQUIREMENT OF OUR POLICY, OR IN AUGMENTING OUR BASIC HONORS TEAM. WE CAN OFFER THEM TRAINING AND REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES FOR THIS PURPOSE.

Q16. DOES DOD AGREE WITH THE HOUSE LEGISLATION ENACTED MARCH 23 ENDING THE AUTHORITY OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE TO GRANT WAIVERS FOR BURIALS AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY?

A16. THE SENATE HAS NOT ACTED ON THE BILL. THE SENATE WILL ESTABLISH ITS OWN TIMELINE FOR THAT, OF COURSE. A SIMILAR \*BILL [H.R. 3211] PASSED IN THE HOUSE LAST APRIL BUT THE BILL WAS NOT CONSIDERED IN THE SENATE. [\*NOTE: IN APRIL, 1998, THE HOUSE PASSED H.R. 3211 BY A VOTE OF 412-0.] THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY [AND THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE] CONCURS WITH THE BASIC INTENT OF THE BILL [H.R. 70] TO CODIFY THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR BURIAL AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY; HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THERE SHOULD ALWAYS BE LATITUDE FOR WAIVERS TO BE GRANTED IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES. [IF PRESSED FOR "BLUNT LANGUAGE"] WE DO NOT SUPPORT THE PROPOSED DENIAL OF AUTHORITY TO GRANT WAIVERS IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.

Q17. WHY IS THIS REPORT BEING CONVEYED TO CONGRESS NOW? IS THE DOD ATTEMPTING TO SEND SOME SORT OF SIGNAL ABOUT KOSOVO BY REMINDING THE CONGRESS OF THE GRIM BUSINESS OF BURYING VETERANS?

A17. THIS MATTER HAS NO LINKAGE TO ONGOING MILITARY OPERATIONS. DOD IS DELIVERING THIS REPORT NOW BECAUSE CONGRESS MANDATED IN LEGISLATION ENACTED SOME TIME AGO THAT THE REPORT BE DELIVERED AT THIS TIME. AS A MATTER OF FACT, WE ARE SEVERAL DAYS LATE.

7. QUESTIONS BEYOND THE SCOPE OF THIS GUIDANCE SHOULD BE REFERRED WITHOUT COMMENT TO OASD(PA).

8. THE OASD(PA) POINT OF CONTACT FOR PLANS IS MR. BRIAN R. KILGALLEN, DSN 225-9528, COML (703) 695-9528; FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES, LTC TOM BEGINES, USA, DSN 227-5133, COML (703) 697-5133.